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## Social Problems and Reforms

*The Middle West Side: A Historical Sketch.* By OTHO G. CARTWRIGHT. *Mothers Who Must Earn.* By KATHARINE ANTHONY. (New York: Survey Associates. 1914. Pp. xiii, 60, 224. \$2.00.)

The present volume is one of two groups of *West Side Studies*, originally planned as part of a wider survey, undertaken by the Bureau of Social Research of the New York School of Philanthropy with funds supplied by the Russell Sage Foundation. The investigations were made under the direction of Miss Pauline Goldmark during 1910, 1911, and 1912 by junior and senior fellows of the school.

*The Middle West Side* presents a historical sketch designed "to introduce a group of social investigators to their field of work." The neighborhood is that "neglected and little known" part of the island of Manhattan comprising the 80 blocks between 34th and 54th Streets, the Hudson River, and Eighth Avenue. The main facts of industrial and social significance in the development of this region are set forth in brief and attractive narrative: the early Dutch settlement, the city plan of 1807, the speculation in real estate, the sanitary survey in 1864, the water front and transit development, the coming of the industries, and the present picture of the vast, monotonous district of "dumb-bell" tenements inhabited by German and Irish foreign-born in the older generation, with other and smaller foreign elements of recent addition, and two negro settlements of considerable size. The geography and development of the district are such that it has never been, and is not today, an integral part of the city life. Absentee landlordism, changing industries, and undeveloped possibilities have combined to hedge in a curiously permanent population, engaged chiefly in unskilled and casual labor, deprived of the opportunities of the more prosperous sections of the city, and without even the dynamic and picturesque quality of life which belongs to the more congested East Side.

*Mothers Who Must Earn* is a study of the work and wages of 370 mothers and the effect of their gainful employment upon family life. Addresses were obtained from schools and philanthropic societies doing work in the neighborhood and visits were made at the homes and places of employment of working mothers. The appendix contains the schedules used and the outlines for indi-

vidual and family histories, quotations from which are generously interpolated throughout the text.

One third of the women forced to work outside the home were widows, but an even larger number (44.1 per cent) had husbands more or less regularly at work; and those with permanently idle husbands not incapacitated were also an important factor. The heaviest burdens were often borne by women whose husbands were living at home but were incapacitated for work through illness or accident. Work by the day at all kinds of household tasks, cleaning office buildings and theatres, and janitress and laundry work are the occupations which, in the order named, claimed the largest numbers of the women studied. In combination with heavy burdens at home all these occupations presented problems of bad working conditions with long hours and low wages. More than one half of the women earned less than six dollars a week. Scrub-women in department stores, who work eight or nine hours a day, make only a dollar a week more than office cleaners, who work only five or six hours a day; but the need of the extra dollar is so great in some households that women are forced to give the longer hours to secure it.

The difficult matter of annual incomes is fearlessly attacked by the writer and estimates are made from the statements of the mothers. By this method it was found that "in families where the mother alone was at work, her average earnings were 88 per cent of the average family income." The mother's earnings were lowest where the family income was highest. Perhaps the temptation to use statistical analysis is carried to the boundary for legitimate generalizations on so small a numerical basis. The numerous tables are, however, clear and well designed, and thirty illustrations contribute to the interest of the survey as a whole. The graphic portrayal of a community's needs is already awakening interest in a long neglected section of New York.

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*Working Girls in Evening Schools. A Statistical Study.* By MARY VAN KLEECK. (New York: Survey Associates, Inc. 1914. Pp. xi, 252. \$1.50.)

Whatever may have been the motive of the investigation, the real interest for the majority of the readers of this book will prob-